

MAYOR'S STREAMLINING COMMITTEE REPORTS

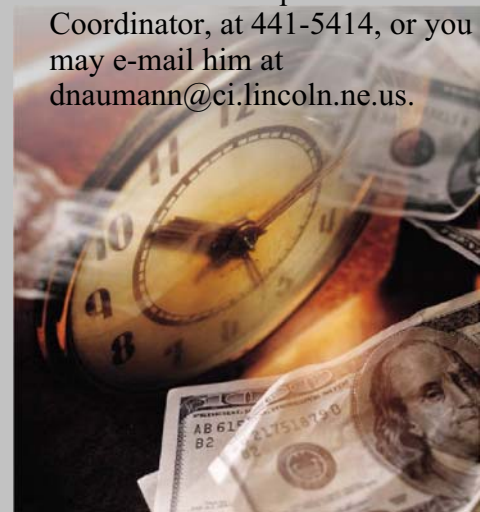
Last fall, the Mayor appointed a committee to consider new ways to make the City's development review processes less cumbersome and time-consuming. They divided into three subcommittees: Zoning and Process, Subdivision and Engineering, and Building Permits, to study the current processes in depth. Each subcommittee developed a set of recommendations for consideration by the Mayor and the other committee members. The committee then met twice as a whole and agreed on a final package of recommendations. The City Council is scheduled to have a briefing on the Committee's recommendations on April 5th.

Some of the tentative recommendations affecting the Planning Department include:

- Eliminating the requirement for **Use Permits** that is now a provision in several zoning classifications. Use permits must be approved by the Planning Commission through a public hearing process. They commit developers to specific site plans and uses, often before they know exactly how the property will be developed. This means that the use permits are often amended numerous times as developments are financed and constructed. The committee proposes to replace this requirement with an improved and expanded set of design standards, which can be handled by administrative review when building permits are submitted.

- Simplifying the very complicated **Planned Unit Development** provisions in the zoning code to make it a more attractive option for developers considering "mixed-use" projects.
- Eliminating the requirement for a **Director's Review** of preliminary plats in the subdivision regulations. Currently, City staff reviews and comments on the application, and the applicant makes modifications based on those comments. The applicant then resubmits the plat for a second staff review and Planning Commission hearing. Eliminating the first review step and going directly to the Planning Commission could reduce the timeframe for approving preliminary plats by two months or more.

If you have questions about the Mayor's streamlining initiative, contact Darl Naumann, the City's Economic Development Coordinator, at 441-5414, or you may e-mail him at dnaumann@ci.lincoln.ne.us.



New Floodplain Rules Endorsed

After a four-hour hearing, the Planning Commission voted to endorse proposed new regulations on modifying flood-prone land in the three-mile area beyond Lincoln's City limits, where most of the City's future growth is expected. The proposed rules prohibit filling flood-prone land if it would cause a rise in flood elevations, and require any fill to be compensated by providing an equal volume of additional storage volume. The Planning Commission asked staff to work with the state roads department on language for bridge structures and to develop language allowing the minimum flood corridors along creeks to be narrower in the upper portions of drainage basins. The City Council is expected to consider the proposed amendments at their 5:30 p.m. meeting on Monday, May 3.

Drinking Bout is Mostly Over

Last month, the City Council voted 5 to 2 to adopt Mayor Seng's proposed amendments to the special permit requirements in the City zoning code that govern the sale of alcoholic beverages for on- and off-site consumption. The new rules include the previous requirement for a minimum distance requirement of 100 feet from the nearest point of the licensed establishment to the nearest point of a residential district. But the new ordinance removed the discretion for the City Council to waive this and other standards on a case-by-case basis.

The new ordinance adds new distance requirements from churches and parks, but removes a previous measurement to a residential use in a non-residential district.



An additional amendment has been filed by an attorney representing developers of commercial properties in the City's newly developing areas where B2 and B5 are the predominant zoning categories. This proposed amendment would set a different set of distance requirements for alcohol sales establishments proposed for these two zoning districts. This amendment was considered and approved by the Planning Commission on March 31st. The City Council will consider this proposal on April 19.

NEW FEATURES



The Planning Department web page has new additions that you may find helpful:

- ✓ A table of key **development standards**, summarizing the lot size, lot width, yard requirements and height limits in each of the City's zoning districts.
- ✓ A table summarizing the City's **landscaping and screening** requirements: what the standards are, when they are applicable, and when plans are submitted.
- ✓ A log of "**New and Pending Cases**" that will eventually be considered by the Planning Commission is updated weekly, which will give interested citizens much earlier notice of upcoming development requests.

AND COMING SOON --

- ✓ Answers to a set of **Frequently Asked Questions** about zoning, subdivisions, vacating rights-of-way, the Comprehensive Plan and other planning topics.



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